



Transition to 100% Permanent Plate Issuance for Apportioned Vehicles

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FROM: Angel Robinson, Director, Office of Vehicle & Motor Carrier Services

TO: All Motor Vehicle Division staff, Motor Carriers, Process Servers, Law Enforcement, and the Iowa Motor Truck Association

SUBJECT

The Iowa DOT will transition to issuing only permanent plates for apportioned vehicles registered under the International Registration Plan (IRP) starting December 1, 2019, for the 2021 registration year.

EXPLANATION

The Iowa DOT currently issues two types of license plates under IRP registration, annual and permanent. Annual license plates require an annual sticker to be adhered to the plate to show a valid registration year. The process for an annual plate requires Iowa to send to the registrant, by mail, an annual cab card with an embedded sticker. Permanent plates do not require an embedded sticker or special paper for the cab card to be mailed to the carrier.

To modernize the IRP registration process, save our customers' time, and make more efficient use of the DOT's financial and human resources, the Iowa DOT is planning to transition all International Registration Plan (IRP) registered vehicles to permanent plates beginning with the 2021 registration year. Iowa would be joining 26 other IRP jurisdictions that solely issue registrations with permanent plates. This change will only affect the 30% of motor carriers that seek registration through IRP with annual plates and law enforcement officers that perform roadside inspections.

HELPFUL ANSWERS TO COMMON QUESTIONS:

HOW WILL THIS CHANGE BENEFIT OUR CUSTOMERS?

By issuing only permanent IRP plates, carriers will be able take advantages of several conveniences when combined with IRP's newly approved e-credential process. The new process will allow for the following.

- **Saves time for carriers who need to track down each vehicle in their fleet and apply the stickers each year.** It can be difficult to coordinate the application of annual stickers across a large fleet that is often spread out across the country at any given time.
- **Allows for the transfer of permanent trailer plates.** As part of this change, all business processes relating to permanent plates were reviewed and we found that the current requirement of prohibiting permanent trailer plate transfers was no longer necessary. This will now be a permissible practice.
- **The return of permanent plates when carriers renew their fleets will no longer be required.** Current business process requires permanent plates to be returned to Iowa DOT when the associated vehicle is deleted from the fleet to prevent their use on another vehicle without paying for a registration. With the elimination of plate stickers as a screening tool for law enforcement and the use of e-credentialing, there is no longer a need to return the plates at renewal time as law enforcement will have the ability to verify the validity of plates electronically.

- **The non-renew and plate pending lists will be eliminated.** The ‘non-renew’ list is a list of permanent plated vehicles that did not renew their registrations after expiration. These customers were automatically billed for another year under the assumption that the plates could still be used. The ‘plate pending list’ is a list of customers who filed their renewal paperwork indicating that certain units would be deleted but the plates had not yet been received by Iowa DOT. Both lists will be discontinued.

WHAT CHANGE IN PROCESS WILL OUR CUSTOMERS SEE?

After communicating our intentions with our customers and interested parties, we will begin issuing all new accounts permanent plates and allow carriers with existing annual plates the opportunity to transition ahead of the deadline in an effort to ease the transition in the future. Carriers that wish to keep their existing annual plate numbers will be provided the opportunity to obtain a “permanent” sticker which would be placed on their existing plate and would effectively convert it to a permanent plate.

Image of an annual plate:



Image of a permanent plate:



Will THE SELF-CERTIFY LIST STILL BE MAINTAINED?

The “self-certify” list will still be maintained for those carriers who need to delete vehicles outside of renewal time. Outside of the renewal period, vehicles may be deleted and credit for Iowa registration fees is given. Customers on this list can self-certify to the Iowa DOT when plates are destroyed, and that date is used to calculate the credit. Keeping this list will be a benefit to large carriers that have high turnover of vehicles while still allowing smaller carriers to return their plates and receive credit when those plates are received should they wish to do so.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT?

The visual cue of the registration month and year sticker will no longer appear on the license plates of apportioned IRP vehicles. Law enforcement will need to verify IRP registration by reviewing the license plate numbers in their system. Law enforcement should expect motor carriers to provide printed registration credentials only if the carrier chooses to print the document themselves. Alternatively, as of January 1, 2019, the International Registration Plan has been amended to allow the use of electronic credentials in all IRP jurisdictions, including Iowa. Therefore, some carriers may choose to provide an electronic version of their registration credentials by phone or other electronic device instead. The latest copy of the IRP, included the amended language for article 6 which refers to electronic credentials can be found at the following link:

https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.irponline.org/resource/resmgr/publications/irp_plan_2018.pdf

WHAT ARE THE SAVINGS?

Eliminating the need to mail some IRP registration documents will save the Iowa DOT 4 hours of work per day for one employee (approximately one-half of a full-time equivalent annually), which will be devoted to higher level functions and improved customer service and response. Eliminating the production and mailing of documents will also reduce expenses for paper, printing, envelopes, and postage, which will save the Iowa DOT approximately \$42,000 per year.